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A

LETTER,

ON

THE CELIBACY

OF

FELLOWS OF COLLEGES:

ADDRESSED TO THE SENATE.

BY

A MEMBER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.

—HANC VENIAM PETIMUSQUE DAMUSQUE VICISSIM.

HOR.

J.W. CLARK'S
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A
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&c. &c.

London, November, 1794.

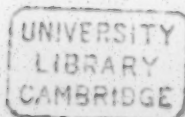
GENTLEMEN,

I HAVE only confidence to hope, that these Remarks may elicit something more luminous and useful from the *opinions of others*. I was induced to lay them before you by the perusal, in a publick newspaper, of a *Letter*, which I shall take the liberty to transcribe, and subjoin by way of postscript to this. The Author has there made some reflections on a subject, which very justly “appears to him of considerable importance to the *welfare of society*.” I could wish he had employed his observation and his pen still further upon it; as it would afford ample scope for the one, and evidently derive much benefit from the other.

Though he clearly speaks from what he feels, I wonder that his feelings were not acted upon *first* by the objects immediately under his

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eye in his own country ; and that he should have travelled as far as *Russia* before he had been “ induced to examine with attention the policy of imposing, as we do, a *strict Celibacy on all the Fellows of the Colleges in our two Universities.*” He does not seem to be thoroughly acquainted with the origin of this old custom : or at least he argues as if he judged to be a secondary cause, that which is, in fact, the only foundation of it. After proposing a variety of as *reasonable* solutions of this difficulty, as so *unreasonable* a subject admits of, he adds, not as a momentous, but as a casual question, “ Or do we, in this important business, blindly follow the absurd prejudices of our forefathers in favour of an unmarried Clergy and Monastick institutions ?”

This last query, Gentlemen, implies the true and primary *cause* of the abridgement of the liberty of this very respectable order of men : and it still exists the grand cause also of the *continuance* of this unreasonable restriction.

The Colleges having been founded when the Roman Catholick was the religion* of the country, the Fellows were enjoined to con-

* The Reformation was begun in England in 1534. Every College in Cambridge was founded before that æra, except Trinity in 1546—Emmanuel in 1584—and Sidney in 1598.

tinue in a state of Celibacy, not because they were destined to be the guardians and promoters of philosophy and religion, but because they were ordered to be Ecclesiasticks, or, at least, Divines.

The laws which forbid an honest man to marry, under the penalty of forfeiting all the real property he has in the world, though supposed Catholick some centuries past, are, in these times, surely liable to exception.

Yes; the wisdom of modern ages has corrected this unjustifiable perversion of the laws of nature, reason, and revelation. The policy of the *reformed* and civilised countries of Europe and America revolt from the idea of the tyrannical injunction of Celibacy upon *any* set of men; and with the same horror, as from the inhuman practice of depriving men of the corporal powers of matrimony.

Why, Gentlemen, should there still remain to cover the surface, and incumber the original and true possessors of the earth, such *interstitial* beings as Eunuchs, Monks, and Fellows of Colleges, who are by compulsion bachelors? It is supposing *vacuums in nature*, which do not exist. Whether even Sir Isaac Newton's profession, or rather confession, did him any credit, is certainly only problematical at best.

Who would believe, that England should retain to the last the most arbitrary canon of the Roman Catholick discipline? Because the Scripture orders him to be the husband of one wife---why should the laws of *England* allow such an affectation of mock piety to subsist under their influence, and suffer the Fellow of a College to be denied even that one?---and that too, only because he is a Fellow of a College, or a Member of a Clerical Body, secular or regular.

The Priest is the very character whom the Constitution encourages with distinguished honours, immunities, and privileges; what reason then can there be, that the person bearing that character (as most of the Fellows do,) should be restrained within such limits as are not prescribed to any other subject within the dominions?

The favourers of this despotick law say,--- This restriction, from a natural right, *might* be an evil if it were *too far* extended: but the numbers who suffer by it bear so small a proportion to the whole body of his Majesty's subjects, that the evil is not felt by the kingdom *at large*, and therefore need not be accounted one. Part of this argument I allow, viz. that whatever be the number of those who are thus abridged of their natural right, (be it one or
two

two thousand,) it is very small indeed, compared with the number of inhabitants of this populous island.

The less the number, however, the greater the evil appears to the sufferers themselves. Besides, the number of those who have been *burnt at the stake* in this kingdom, and of those who have been *emasculated* in others, bears but a small proportion to the whole human race. Such I will leave as the *general* answer to this argument.

We will now consider it *particularly*. You, who are advocates for Celibacy in others, judge from your own apathy, or your own habits, of the unimportance of this exclusion. I trust, however, that you have *general* sensibility enough to be convinced, and candour enough to acknowledge, that the temporal happiness of individuals, *where it may reasonably, ought* to be consulted.

You, Gentlemen, should not arrogate to yourselves the power or privilege to decide, whether *matrimony* would promote the happiness of *others*. In charity, leave *them* their option; whether you yourselves prefer matrimony, or not. Allowing them the power to commit it, does not impose on them the necessity of incurring it.

Now

Now I would ask, why these Socii, or Fellows, were by their founders ordered to profess Divinity, almost to the exclusion of the other sciences? Until the advocates for Celibacy produce a better, this reason will stand good :---It was a wise provision of the founders, for the supply of fit and able Ministers of the Church. These devout personages, well aware how much the existence and prosperity of Religion depend upon the wisdom and goodness of its pastors, and as well aware how much wisdom and goodness are promoted and preserved by the aid of literature and philosophy, have very prudently judged, that they whose minds have been most plentifully stored with the fruits of study and meditation, hold out the greatest reason for hope, that they will themselves exhibit the brightest examples of the excellence of the life prescribed by the Gospel which they are destined to preach. But in this reason, Celibacy has no greater claim to preference than Matrimony has.

It has been objected to those *Fellows of the Colleges*, who have expressed their wish that this restriction were relaxed, that THEY are only mortified and disappointed by the Veto under which *they* are restrained :---that they only grumble because *they* are not admitted to (what is generally affirmed to be) the cordial
comfort

comfort of private life, and an indefeasible right of man---allowed by the policy of the country and recommended by the wisdom of the inspired writings---the holy state of Wedlock.

It has also been objected against them, that they *wilfully* and *deliberately* admit themselves into these Societies; and for three, or twice three years, *voluntarily* submit to their rigid discipline: and this too, in hopes of being at last rewarded with the *honours* and *emoluments* which are held out to them, at the same time conscious of the conditions upon which they are to enjoy them.*

It is further objected to them, that after all this, when they *have obtained* the object which they have been so long soliciting; when they are enjoying all the emoluments, and indulging in the luxuries which the situation affords, even *then* they ungratefully and unreasonably complain of the hardships under which they labour;---condemn the folly of the founders who gave them laws, the inadvertence of the

* The Gentlemen mean the young men should follow Cicero's advice, viz. *Summ quisque noscat ingenium; acremque se et bonorum et vitiorum judicem præbeat: ne scænici, plus quam nos videantur habere prudentiæ: illi enim non optimas, sed sibi accommodatissimas fabulas eligunt. Ad quas igitur res aptissimi erimus, in iis potissimum elaborabimus. CIC. DE OFF. I. 31.*

legislature,

legislature, which suffers them still to remain in force, and their own unlucky stars which have determined them to submit to, and shackle themselves in such chains, and compelled them, at length, to endure, and abide under, their severity.

These, too, Gentlemen, are dwelt upon as plausible arguments, and therefore require an answer. If the restriction in itself, as I contend it is, be contrary to Reason, Nature, and Revelation, *that* is, itself, an answer to this specious objection. But we will, for a moment, if possible, suppose this Popish law to be admissible; it may, nevertheless, in some instances be objectionable: and I shall prove it to be so in the present.

The Fellows are condemned for complaining of hardships---first, which they feel in their own persons;---secondly to which they have *voluntarily* submitted;---and, thirdly, which they do not avoid by resignation. The prize, which is offered to the industrious youth of our Universities,---a Fellowship, and a share in the government, honours, and emoluments of the most learned and honourable societies in the world; *this prize* is such as attracts the notice and ambition, as stimulates the zeal and ardour *only* of the most exalted and generous minds among our youth. The splendor of
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the honour so catches, perhaps dazzles their sight, that they then either overlook or despise the *hardships* which the acquisition imposes: they aim only at the crown, without considering its weight.

Besides, what is the hardship of which they complain? It is a hardship, which is felt only *when it is imposed*; neither can it be conceived but by those only who actually labour under it. It is a bar to a *mode* of happiness, which, though common, though necessary to men of a certain age, yet, perhaps, never entered the heart of a young man to conceive. If he be grave and studious, he has the wisdom of past ages within his reach:---if he be lively, active, fond of bodily exercises, he is never at a loss for a partner in his amusements. He finds, in the companions of his own age, all the gratifications which his temper and his *present* views demand. Some scheme is always ready for the next day's occupation. And---if he be vicious and debauched, it is a melancholy confession, but we must allow, that he has not far to go, before he can gratify every passion of which his voluptuous senses are susceptible.

Hence, then, Gentlemen, to the species of enjoyment and society, to which I now solicit your attention and favour, he is a total stran-

ger: his nature does not comprehend it. How can he reconcile to himself the dull notion of *domestick* comfort?---the quiet and sober joys of a husband? He, therefore, voluntarily and deliberately subscribes to the prohibition of what he is not at all sensible can affect his happiness.

Some young men, I repeat, may not be restrained, either by the laws of their country or their religion, from gratifying the passions, whose power every one is free to acknowledge, though the advocate for Celibacy may have had strength to overcome, should he feel them. They may indulge, perhaps, without any other shame than that of appearing to be ashamed, or of being backward to confess their indulgence; and without any other fear, than that of suffering from the consequence of it.

Though these things may sit easy on a young man, yet we know, Gentlemen, that this is far from being the case (let it be said to the honour of the age, and of the persons among whom we live,) with those further advanced in years and discretion. Their respect for the opinions of their country, and the precepts of their religion, increases and improves as they approach nearer to that period of life in which *domestick* happiness becomes
the

the dearest object of the greater part of mankind.

Thus, they who labour under this unhappy restriction, never come to a sense of its severity and cruelty, until they are so hampered and shackled in the toils of it, that it is impossible for them to escape. Besides, the larger part, perhaps nineteen out of twenty, of these Gentlemen, are in Holy Orders, and therefore a change of their profession, were they to desire it, is impossible; and such change could effect, at most, only a greater connivance at illicit indulgence.*

The rest of the world are very much like the candidates for our Fellowships. The rest of the world, because they do not feel experimentally the galling fetters of these prohibitory laws, do not even *think* upon this matter; and therefore do not decide in consequence of the conclusions of their reason, when they censure our youth for *voluntarily* submitting

* Cicero seems to have considered the case before us: viz. "Qui igitur, ad naturæ suæ non vitiosæ genus, consilium vivendi omne contulerit, is constantiam teneat (id enim maxime decet) nisi forte se intellexerit errasse in deligendo genere vitæ. Quod si acciderit (potest autem accidere) faciendæ morum institutorumque mutatio est. Eam mutationem, si tempora adjuvabunt, facilius commodiusque faciemus: sin minus, sensim pedetentimque faciendæ. Commutato autem genere vitæ, omni ratione curandum est, ut id bono consilio fecisse videamur." Cic. *de Off.* i. 33.

to the rigour of our laws; and when made Fellows of Colleges, like the rest of the world, they complain of what *they do bodily* and *individually feel*; they cry out as soon as the edge of these statutable instruments acts against them: instruments which, though they cut not like steel, do still a more barbarous office---they penetrate the very soul, and sever from them the half of their enjoyments;---they disturb the composure of their minds, and enervate the vigour of their health. These men *may* want *common sense*; but they who say they are *without excuse* for dissatisfaction, want the *common feelings of humanity*.

Making allowance, then, (if ignorance can ever be excused,) for this ignorance in our youth of the conditions to which they *tacitly* submit;---*tacitly* indeed! for how should they know what it is they abjure, when they have never seen the statutes (which I believe is always the case) before they swear to observe them? Making allowance then, I say, for their inexperience, let us next suppose that they are not only made fully acquainted with the rigour of the statute, but even that they begin really to conceive *why*, or in what sense the statute is rigorous: surely, every unprejudiced man will confess, how great resolution is requisite for a young man to reject them,
when

when the honour and emoluments of a Fellowship are tendered to his acceptance, to refuse the reward which his friends have educated him purposely to obtain; and to which his own ambition (under *their* guidance and incitement) has pointed as the prize of all his exertions. He however submits, in hopes, perhaps, that he shall not *feel* the oppression, or that he may not long have occasion to endure it.

A melancholy reflection indeed! that the unwise designation of his guardians, and the witless inexperience of his youth, should have destined him to have solicited, for so many years, what he cannot at last accept, without sacrificing what is looked upon as one of the first privileges *secured to man in civilised society*, (in consideration of what he gives up to that society,) without professing an apathy or inability, of which the world thinks it dishonourable to be suspected.*

It

* Gentlemen should permit Cicero to *apologise* for the young men in this case. "Imprimis autem constituendum est, quos nos et quales esse velimus, et in quo genere vitæ: quæ deliberatio est omnium difficillima: ineunte enim adolescentiâ, *cum est maxima imbecillitas animi*, tum id sibi quisque genus ætatis degendæ constituit, quod maxime adamavit, itaque ante implicatur aliquo certo genere cursuque vivendi, quam potuit, quid optimum esset, judicare. Plerumque autem, parentum præceptis imbuti ad eorum consuetudinem moremque deducimur: alii multitudinis
judicio

It is further argued, in favour of this anti-christian statute, that the Gentlemen in the Army cannot marry with better prospects of matrimonial happiness, than the Fellows of Colleges. This may be true, or it may not; it makes nothing against this question. The Gentlemen of the Army *may marry, if they please*, without forfeiting *thereby* their means of subsistence. It is only against the *restriction* that I am arguing.* I am not contending that all Fellows of Colleges *should* marry, but that they may have the power to do it, and still, like Officers in the Army, retain what by their industry and genius they may have acquired. I trust that *their* prudence is as sufficient a

judicio feruntur, quæque *majori* parti pulcherrima videantur, ea maxime exoptant: *nonnulli* tamen felicitate quâdam, five Bonitate Naturæ, five parentum disciplinâ *rectam* vitæ secuti sunt viam." *Cic. de Off. i. 31.*

* "The decay of the military spirit among the Italians was manifest from their disuse of duelling, the most refined method of executing private revenge, and from substituting in place of it the more artful but cowardly practice of poisoning. Their taste was in like manner varied according to this alteration of their circumstances; and the people began to relish those ludicrous descriptions of low life and licentious manners, which we meet with in the Tales of Boccace, and many other writers, entirely repugnant to the gravity and decorum of former times, and which *appear to have taken their origin from the Monks*, in consequence of dispositions and habits which their *constrained and unnatural* situation had a tendency to produce." *Or. of R. p. 103.*

security

security from the danger of committing matrimony absurdly, as that of any other set of Gentlemen in the kingdom.

But the aim both of those who maintain the wisdom and godliness, and of those who maintain the impolicy and impiety of this law, is, I have no doubt, the good of the kingdom at large, and of the University in particular. I will therefore candidly allow, that this scheme of permitting *Fellows* of Colleges to marry, which the *Masters* of Colleges *are permitted to do*, has *one* difficulty attending it, which it may not be an easy matter to remedy effectually and completely.

---It may be said, I am a bad advocate; because I produce arguments for my adversaries to dress against me. Be it so: but it will be proved, I trust, that I am an advocate for *policy* and *humanity*.

“In Colleges there is certainly not room for wives, and the consequence of them---families.” The Masters being not forbidden the privilege of Matrimony, are accordingly provided with accommodations adequate to the comfortable, and even the superb maintenance of a household. But they are not expected, and certainly would not be willing to transact the whole business of their Societies.

Here

Here then, Gentlemen, is the real difficulty. If the Fellows are all married, they cannot come. Who must then be the shepherds of this unruly flock? It certainly must never be intrusted to the mercenary negligence of hirelings. This is the prop on which rests every thing that has the appearance of *reason* on the side which I oppose. But this *appearance*, I think, may be extinguished.

The present system of academical discipline, or, perhaps, the present established form of the University, could not subsist, we are told, were matrimony conceded to the Fellows. To this I answer, fewer Fellows, were it conceded, would reside; much fewer than do at present: many would marry and settle in the country. The consequence then of this change in their place of residence is the matter to be considered: for I will, for the instant, imagine, that the peculiar emoluments necessarily attached to residence may induce a certain portion of the Fellows to reside; sufficient, together with the Master, to transact all the business, and maintain all the discipline of the Society.

Those who *would* marry if they *could*, promote the benefit and discipline of their respective Societies, *as residents*, in no other manner, if they are not Tutors, than by the example
which

which they exhibit to the Undergraduates of studiousness and good conduct. All, then, that would be lost to the University by their residence in the country would be their example.*

How then is the loss of these examples to be supplied? By the more constant and uniform attendance, and inspection into the welfare of the Society, which might be given by a Tutor, who is (like the Master) allowed to be married, and living the whole year within the walls of the College.

But it may be asked, where is he to find room for a Family? I answer, in the rooms left vacant by the Fellows retired with their Wives. But it may be said, will a Master and a Tutor be competent to the whole management of the concerns of the Society? It does not follow that *every* other Fellow *will* marry and retire, because he may do it. It may answer the purpose and inclinations of some to continue single and resident. Or, a Fellow who is married, and lives in the town, may come without any great inconvenience

* Which would be a very great acquisition to the village in which they might be placed. I will not dwell *here*, but will presently notice more particularly the manifest benefit to be derived to a parish from the family of a resident Minister, greater than from the solitary, inconstant, and irregular appearance of a hasty Curate, perhaps once a week.

to himself or the College, and give his lectures in the Hall, as Mr. Vince has done for years.

The custom of the *Tutor, as such, giving Lectures*, is an innovation upon the rules of the Societies :---(*that* is the office of the Lecturers)---discipline, and the inspection of the accounts of their Pupils, is their *only statutable* duty. Should they decline giving Lectures, they will have more leisure and opportunity to assist the Master, and alleviate the fatigues of *his* office.

The most industrious Graduates resident in the University, (it is, perhaps, too obvious to need to be particularly mentioned,) are those *who are either married, and not resident in College*, or who give publick Lectures to the University; and whose emoluments depend upon their industry, and the popularity of their Lectures.

The publick Lectures at present given by Mr. Vince, Professors Harwood, Farish, Wollaston, and Hey, require greater application in the Lecturers, and are attended more regularly and more eagerly by the Pupils, than any College Lectures given by any resident and unmarried Tutor in the University. And the reasons for this are obvious. What greater motives to render their Lectures worth attending

tending can exist, than what operate upon some of these Gentlemen? A Wife and a Family call upon them for provision and protection. And, which is of great moment, the Pupils attend in preference the Lectures upon *that* science to which their taste and future profession naturally introduce them.--- At *present*, a young man *must* be a mathematician, or *need* be nothing.*

If, then, a wife and a family are incentives to industry, a wife and a family may be pleaded as arguments in favour of Matrimony in any case, and for the abolition of all injunctions upon Celibacy in ours. And it does not appear that such a change in the condition of the Tutor will at all operate to the disadvantage of the Pupil.

* " Ipfi autem genere quam personam velimus à nostrâ voluntate proficiscitur. Itaque se alii ad Philosophiam, alii ad Jus Civile, alii ad Eloquentiam applicant: ipsarumque virtutum in aliâ alius mavult excellere. Admodum autem tenenda sunt sua cuique, non vitiosa, sed tamen propria, quò facilius decorum illud, quod quærimus retineatur. Sic enim est faciendum, ut contra universam naturam nihil contendamus; câ tamen conservatâ, propriam naturam sequamur: ut etiam si sint alia graviora atque meliora, tamen nos studia, *nostræ naturæ regula*, metiamur: *neque enim attinet repugnare naturæ, nec quidquam sequi quod assequi non queas.*" CIC. *de Off.* L. i. S. 31, 32.

Any Gentleman who takes the trouble to look over what I have written, will be in some measure satisfied for it by reading the 31st, 32d, 33d, and 34th Sections of *Cic. Off.* L. i.

But it is objected, "The *Succeſſion* would be very much *retarded* by *extending* the permission of Matrimony to the Fellows." *That*, I believe, is not the caſe in any great degree. It will be found, upon calculation, that not one in ten of the Fellows vacate *merely* by *being married*. They in general marry *becauſe they have a Proviſion for a Family: and that Proviſion would vacate their Fellowſhips, though they did not marry*.

It may, perhaps, be alledged, that ſome few make imprudent connections, without *ſuch* a Proviſion. Upon whom, then, can the emoluments of a Fellowſhip be better beſtowed, than upon a poor Clergyman? When would he rejoice ſo much in the acceſſion to a living and an increaſe of income, as when he ſhall have the greateſt need of it? when he ſhall have a numerous offspring to educate?

And whom will he thus exclude from the Fellowſhip, which he retains for the ſupport of his Family? *Some one or other*---for it cannot be *previously* determined whom, becauſe his Fellowſhip will be filled up by *free election*: ſome one or other, who probably has not a Family to ſupport.

But again. Perhaps there are now forty young men in the ſame ſpace of time ſent to the ſame College, which may have, as intice-
ments

ments to them to enter into it, twenty Fellowships, which may *all* be likely to be vacated once in forty years.---Let us alter this statement, and say, that in consequence of the allowance of Matrimony to these twenty Fellows, their Fellowships, instead of being all vacated once in *forty* years, will only be vacated once in *fifty*.

In that case, how many less than forty young men will be sent in the same space of time to be Candidates for these twenty Fellowships?---Let us suppose ten less. What then becomes of these *ten*? Are they lost to society, because their destination in life may be changed? because they are not sent to College? and, therefore, have not *the chance* of being sometime made *Fellows of a College*, whether they may be deserving of the honour, or not?

And what becomes of the emoluments which *they* have not obtained? Are they worse disposed of, because they are indulged to a person who *is really* Fellow of a College? who has certainly deserved them? and who has a Family to support with them?

I have not seen the Preamble to the Act of Parliament permitting Matrimony to the Heads of Colleges in the University of Oxford; nor am I informed how far the *Heads* may have taken

taken advantage of it. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt, but that the prudent reasons for such permission *therein* delivered by the wisdom of the Legislature, would equally apply to the wisdom of precluding the *Fellows* of Colleges from adopting the same unnatural incitement to Vice, abrogated by that Act.

And further. Allow the Succession to be retarded:---let the number of admissions on that account be a little diminished. The consequence will be, that the Societies, instead of being governed by young, will be governed by older men. Surely, *that* is no *solid* objection to the change: particularly, when these older men will have greater motives (as Fathers) to support the credit and popularity of themselves and the Societies, than these younger men *now* have, who are supposed to have no such motives.

But, allowing this unmerciful restriction to be done away;---allowing, also, that the Individuals, the Colleges, the University, the Kingdom at large, will benefit by the hereditary privilege of Matrimony being made common to the Fellows, with the rest of their fellow-subjects: it is still argued by those who are *averse to change at all events*, that this alleviation implies an alteration, and that alteration may induce a reversion of the Statutes
of

of our Colleges, and of the University;---that a reversion is not wanted;---that the minds of men are already too much agitated to leave leisure and steadiness sufficient to make such improvements;---and that the present juncture is, *of all*, the most improper---the most critical---the most dangerous.

In answer to this, I say, that the unquietness of the times, as far as the University is concerned, and the derangement of their attention to its proper subjects in the Members of the University, is much, if not entirely, owing to the constrained state of Celibacy, against which we are contending. Had the Gentlemen, of whom it is complained that they are endeavouring to derange the uniformity, and interrupt the sober and orthodox proceedings of the University---had they Wives and Families to engage their attention, they would be full as well employed, *at least*, as they *now* are in their *sceptical speculations*, whether they relate to College Discipline, Politicks, or Divinity.

But something more may still be urged respecting the situation of these Gentlemen, who thus trouble the peaceful and unvaried tenor of the thoughts of the Members of our Senate. They are found not only among the *unmarried*, but in the greatest number among those,

those, who are *not* peculiarly and distinctly busied in the Government and Discipline of our Societies.

The mind of man, you know, Gentlemen, *must* be occupied; *so far* it is subservient to *necessity*, but no further. It will *select* for its occupation that subject, to which his interest or his predilection shall direct it. And to what can we imagine the mind of a Fellow of a College will have recourse for relaxation in those hours, in which variety is almost necessary to our existence? A Fellow of a College, who has nothing but books for his business---books for his amusement---and bookish men for his companions? who has nothing to look forward to; beyond all these, but a Living and a Wife? For I am now speaking of those who by chance, or by other means, are excluded from the *actual* business of the Society, and from any expectation of ever being employed in it as Tutors.

If the orthodox studies of the University---the future Living, or the future Wife, do not employ *all* his meditations, what is left for him but *speculations which may do no good to him, but great injury to the peace and gravity of the University*.

Look round you, Gentlemen, (for I shall frequently repeat it,) and examine whether
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the disaffected among you be not unmarried, be not the *non-regentes* in their respective Colleges? What then can be urged as a reasonable objection to giving *them* their liberty, and freeing *yourselves* from so *troublesome an incumbrance*? In short, I will not hesitate to *affirm*, that in general *the unquiet and dissatisfied tempers, both here and in the kingdom at large, fluctuate in the breasts of unmarried men, be their departments in life ecclesiastical or civil.**

Once again, Gentlemen. Cast your eyes over that part of the *country* with which you are best acquainted. Observe *there* the characters, modes of life, and the Congregations of the different orders of the Clergy ---I mean the *married* and the *unmarried*. I would not lay the least imputation upon the unmarried for their ill success as Ministers. Their Celibacy is, in general, *not their fault*, but their misfortune. The married, and for no other reason but because they are married, support characters more clerical: their modes of life are more clerical---their Congregations are more numerous, more re-

* "Privatum autem oportet *æquo* et *pari* cum civibus jure vivere: tum, in republicâ, ea velle, quæ *tranquilla* et honesta sint: talem enim et sentire bonum civem, et dicere solemus," Cic. *de Off.* i. 34.

gular in attendance, and more confident in their Ministers.

Gentlemen, the Wife of a Clergyman may do as much good by occasional inspection into the domestick wants of the poor, as the Clergyman himself by his occasional discourses to them, (who are destitute,) upon temperance and self-denial. As there is no virtue in the Preacher which will not flourish more in the genial estate of Matrimony, than in the cold torpidity of Celibacy; so also there is no comfort, no happiness, which the endearing tenderness, the anxious sollicitude, the watchful prudence of a Wife---but why do I speak of these to you, who are advocates for Celibacy---who hear, with scepticism or disdain, of qualities, which your cold hearts have no conception of?

In the interval, since the clause above was written, in which I observed, that those who are denominated men of a restless disposition, both Ecclesiastical and Civil, are, for the most part, unmarried---I have seen an observation of Lord Verulam, viz. "that the plurality of great characters have been Bachelors," repeated by an Author, from whom is borrowed the following quotation:

"At

“ At present,” says he, “ the three first Statesmen, Mr. P—tt, Mr. F—x, and L—d T——w, are unmarried. What a race of Politicians, Generals, and Philosophers, might be expected in a nation, in which every lofty soul were unimpeded, by the care of providing for his offspring, from following any grand object of contemplation! This consideration has detained the Soldier from the field---has stopped the voice of the Patriot---and deadened the curiosity of the Philosopher. How oft have the lucubrations of the latter been interrupted by the scoldings of a Xantippe!” &c. &c.

The Author in this last clause is disposed to be humorous. However, it was, I imagine, upon *some such* suspicion, that our Legislators thought proper to consult, as they have done, for the quiet of the University; and to distrust either the *prudence* of its Members, or the *gentleness* of the Sex.

Still, I shall not erase the quotation; though, to an *inexperienced* reader it may *appear* to make against the question which I maintain, and to add another prop to the number which are wanted to support the wisdom of our ancestors, or, rather, the opinion of its perfection and infallibility in *all* points. I shall leave it where it is; convinced, though its dissimilarity

from my former assertions may offend *at first sight*, that by use its inequalities will wear off, and its similarity and coincidence *only* will *ultimately* strike their conviction.

But, upon second thought---it may be of importance, perhaps, to be *more explicit* on this head; and to observe, that those distinguished characters (named above) are in such a state of *independence*, that a small deviation in *their* conduct from the common opinion and vulgar decorum are overlooked, or eclipsed in the splendor of their rank or their abilities. That these Gentlemen, with *one* exception, have *kept their Mistresses*---though they have had *no Wives*---is too notorious to be questioned. Though I do not know that, *on that account*, they are worse Statesmen, or received by all parties, in all companies, by both sexes, of both persuasions, with less deference or respect.

But this irregularity produces a different effect, when attached to the clerical character, in which most Fellows of Colleges appear. Whatever indulgence individuals may be willing to allow a Clergyman in their *private* sentiments, as a man, subject to like passions as they are; yet the most honourable conduct to the most virtuous Mistress would, in him,
not

not be permitted or overlooked, as it is in these high and venerable characters.

Besides---the Gentlemen, for whose emancipation I plead, would probably not shine *in the world* like Mr. P—tt, &c. They, perhaps, fall very short of his *great* qualities: but---*they may abound in those in which he is supposed to be deficient.* Both which are reasons *for their* marrying. They may, *though married*, be as *good* men as Mr. F—x, or L—d T——w; and probably will be as fruitful subjects as Mr. P—tt: and, certainly, will be better parish priests than were they Bachelors.

Once more, Gentlemen, and I shall have done with arguments *ad verecundiam*. It is one of the passions radically inherent in human nature, which their Founders forbid Fellows of Colleges to indulge: and that for two reasons---First, because it is such a passion; and, secondly, because the effects of indulging it, even in the moderate way of Matrimony, would be a great annoyance to the progress of their studies.

Now, instead of prescribing, or conniving at such promiscuous concubinage as might serve to keep the mind calm, and at liberty for deep and continued meditations, the statutes absolutely forbid all such modes of giving
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ing vent to the natural and occasional effervescence of the blood ; or, instead of cooling it by short diet,* the Fellows of our Colleges are pampered with all the luxuries which the country can afford. Thus, the bounty of their benefactors has proved the very means of their greatest mortification. In the zeal of their charity they have over-run the boundaries of good sense. Thus are these poor fellows condemned to tantalization during the *better part of their lives*. In short, it is the cruellest combination of folly and superstition that exists in any country in Europe, in which there exists not an *actual Inquisition*, or Conservatorios like those of Lucia in Puglia. Though the Eunuch in a *Seraglio* lives in Paradise, qui non tabescit, dempto quod non novit.

“ In England, Eunuchs are never made but on occasion of some disease, which renders

* And *long* vigilance ; unless it be measured Poeticè,

“ Ut nox longa, quibus mentitur amica.”

Perhaps the whole of this famous passage may not appear to some readers mal à propos to be here transcribed :

“ Ut nox longa, quibus mentitur amica, diesque

“ Longa videtur opus debentibus ; ut piger annus

“ Pupillis, quos dura premit custodia matrum ;

“ Sic mihi tarda fluunt ingrataque tempora, quæ spem

“ Consiliumque morantur agendi gnaviter id, quod

“ Æquè pauperibus prodest, locupletibus æquè ;

“ Æquè neglectum pueris senibusque nocebit.” HOR.

fuch

such an operation *necessary*." In such a case, indeed, our Statutes would preclude our Fellows of Colleges from Matrimony, with as much wisdom: "as by an Arret of the Grand Chamber in Paris, it was, in 1665, adjudged, that a Eunuch could not marry, not even with the consent of the women, and all the parties on both sides."

"In the Council of Nice those were condemned, who, out of an indiscreet zeal, and to guard themselves from sensual pleasures, should make themselves Eunuchs. Such as thus mutilated their bodies, *were excluded from Holy Orders*: witness, Leontius, Bishop of Antioch, who was deposed for having practised this cruelty on himself; and the Bishop of Alexandria excommunicated two Monks, who had followed this example, on pretence of securing themselves from the impetuous motions of concupiscence." The age of these Monks is not specified; but it is probable, that they were not forty years of age:---the age about which our Monk *may* have the good fortune to cease to be *regular*, and to be admitted into the *secular* order of Clergy. But if he be not of the *ecclesiastical* Order, he must forfeit his means of subsistence, or live like an *Eunuch*, or be a sinner all his life time.

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One would think, that the Legislators of our Colleges had been *deceived* like "*Origen, who, upon a misunderstanding of our Saviour's words in St. Matthew, xix. 12. made himself a Eunuch.*" Not that they submitted *themselves* to the rigour of their laws, but thought they did God service when "they made Eunuchs (or Thlibiæ) of *other men.*"

The Emperor Augustus was so satisfied of the importance of Matrimony, that on his return to Rome from his wars, he thus addressed himself to his unmarried Nobles:---
 "Your lives and actions are so peculiar, that I know not by what name to call you. Not by that of Men, for you perform nothing that is manly:---not by that of Citizens, for the city may perish for any care of yours:---nor by that of Romans, for you design to extirpate the Roman name. You are guilty of murder, in not suffering those to be born, who should proceed from you;---of impiety, in causing the names of your ancestors to cease;---and of sacrilege, in destroying your kind, which proceeds from Heaven. In this respect, therefore, you dissolve the Government, in disobeying its laws;---betray your Country, by making it barren and waste;---nay, and demolish your City, by depriving it of inhabitants. And I am sensible, that all this proceeds not
 from

from any kind of virtue or abstinence, but from a looseness and wantonness, which ought never to be encouraged in any civil Government."*

From hence we learn in what abhorrence this great man held a state of Celibacy in those whom no extraordinary circumstances prevented from entering into the more honourable state of Matrimony : and the consideration of the question, whether such circumstances necessarily exist in the case of those educated for the Ministry of the Church, or for the study and advancement of learning in general, it is the object of these Remarks to promote.

But I have engaged your attention, Gentlemen, perhaps, too long already. I will make the best compensation I can, by finishing with the Letter to which I alluded when I began. For taking such a liberty, I hope *the Author* will excuse me ; to you I need make no apology, because the Letter, I think, is well worth your notice.

* A tax for not marrying was imposed in the year of Rome 350. At the Census, or review of the people, each person was asked " Et tu, ex animi sententiâ, Uxorem habes Liberum quærendorum causâ ?" He who had no wife was hereupon fined after a certain rate, called *Æs Uxorium*.

The same principle seems to have actuated our own Legislature, when it imposed a *double* tax on *Bachelors* keeping servants.

“ **BY** the regulations of the Imperial Seminary at Moscow it is established, that no man shall be elected to the office of Principal Superintendant, who is not married; the importance of the place making it improper to trust it to a Bachelor. This singular rule having induced me to examine with attention the policy of imposing, as we do, a strict Celibacy on all the Fellows of Colleges, has led me to make some reflections on that subject, which I shall venture to submit to the consideration of those who may be better acquainted with the state of our Universities than I am, anxious to begin an enquiry, which to me appears of considerable importance to the welfare of society.

“ The leisure which a man unencumbered with a family enjoys; his freedom from care and anxiety; and the removal of every cause that could distract him from literary pursuits; are advantages on the side of Celibacy which appear to the most superficial observer; and seemingly are so important, that they alone have, I believed, sufficed to decide the general opinion in favour of the law which prohibits all the residents in the Universities from marrying. But a more accurate investigation will give us reason to suspect, that these
advantages

advantages are less weighty than we have been taught to imagine; and that were they as great as our prejudices represent them, yet they would not prove the law in question to be beneficial.

“ In every enquiry relative to the conduct of mankind, we must acknowledge theory to be an insufficient guide. To experience, therefore, let us appeal for the advantages of Celibacy, and we shall not, I believe, find them to be numerous. Among men who are engaged in the active scenes of life, we must observe, that those who are married, almost exclusively, are diligent; and that a bachelor and an idler are little less than synonymous terms. The hopes of raising a name, and of establishing a family in affluence and independence, make every labour light, and sooth every fatigue, even of the most disagreeable employment; and to this observation my experience does not suggest to me an exception, nor do I believe any instance can be produced, in which marriage was the occasion of idleness. The diminution of leisure we find compensated by additional motives for exertion; and the loss of time which the care of a family occasions, appears to be a less evil than the listless indifference arising from the want of those powerful motives to diligence which

natural affection supplies. And what can be the difference between the Fellows of our Colleges and the rest of mankind, that should prevent the motives, which operate so powerfully on others, from equally influencing them? that shall make among them that state favourable to diligence, which in every other state is the parent of idleness and dissipation? Is it their being appointed to superintend the education of youth, that makes it necessary to prevent them from ever knowing the feelings of a father? And do we prefer entrusting our children to those *who never had a son*, rather than to men acquainted with the anxious cares of parental solicitude? Or do we in this most important business blindly follow the absurd prejudices of our forefathers in favour of an unmarried Clergy and Monastick institutions?

“ But the question before us relates not to the advantages of a voluntary Celibacy. To justify the present law in our Universities, it must be proved that a man *desirous of marrying*, is rendered more fit for performing his duty as a Fellow, by being prevented from entering into that state, than he would be if he indulged his inclination. For the law applies not to those who *willingly* continue Bachelors; with regard to them it is a dead letter: it operates only on those who are dissatisfied with
their

their present state, and, if permitted, would change it. And the wise method which it takes to render these men useful members of the communities to which they belong, is to perpetuate their dissatisfaction, to impose upon them a restraint which grows intolerable as soon as it is felt, and which never can be removed; to excite in their minds that dislike to their situation, and that desire of change, which must inevitably produce an unsettled state of mind, unfavourable to every plan of systematick application, and but too likely to encourage that indolent and unprofitable life which has always been the characteristick of Monks.

“ Thus are the advantages of Celibacy doubtful, and the mischiefs arising from enforcing it by law certain.

“ Nor let the flourishing condition of our Universities be considered as a confutation of my theory. That can never be used as an argument, till the law in question is shewn to have been one of its essential causes; till instances are produced of men, who, in consequence of an *unwilling* Celibacy, attained a degree of eminence which marriage would necessarily have prevented them from reaching, and it is proved that there are not any *contrary instances*; that there are not any examples

amples of men to whom Celibacy has been injurious.

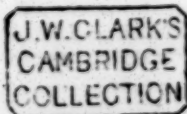
“ But there is one consideration which I have not yet mentioned, that proves confessedly the impropriety of discouraging Celibacy among the Clergy, and that applies still more forcibly to the case which we are now examining.

“ The proneness of youth to dissolute pleasures is but too well known, and their readiness to seize on any circumstances which may serve to palliate their licentiousness, cannot but be observed. What then would be the mischief which any unlucky example of immoral conduct among those appointed to be their instructors would occasion ! How would it confirm in unlawful pursuits those who had already begun them ! and how gladly it would be quoted, to corrupt those who are yet innocent !---And who will answer that no such examples will occur among hundreds of men condemned to Celibacy ? Who will engage that, among so many, not one will be suspected ? and in this place the suspicion is as injurious as the reality. I do not mean to accuse the Fellows of our Colleges of immorality : unacquainted with their conduct, I argue only from the acknowledged principles of human nature ; and, guided by them, I will venture to assert, that, be that conduct as pure as it may,

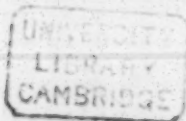
may, the fondness which young men naturally have to countenance their own vices by those of their seniors, will cause them to be suspected, so long as they are restrained from marrying; and to remove this evil there are no means but repealing the law which gives strength to these suspicions, and without which they could never arise.

“ Unwilling to be prolix, I shall not pursue my enquiry any further; satisfied if what I have already suggested be sufficient to excite attention to this interesting subject; and confident, that an impartial examination would end in condemning the prejudices of our forefathers in favour of an unmarried Clergy and monastick Institutions.

“ O. C. D. D.”



THE END.



ERRATA.

- Page 19, note, line 1, for *genere* read *gerere*.
22, last line, for *reversion* read *revision*.
23, l. 2, for *reversion* read *revision*.
27, l. 16, for *I imagine* read *I will imagine*.
28, l. 4, for *their* read *your*.
28, l. 11, for *are* read *is*.
31, l. 7, for *women* read *woman*.

